

Peter: Failure & Forgiveness
GLIMPSE OF GLORY

Tuesday, October 20

Reading: Matthew 17

Matthew 17:2 *There [Jesus] was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus...5 While [Peter] was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a Voice from the cloud said, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"*

After that pivotal moment in Caesarea Philippi where Peter confessed that Jesus was “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” and Jesus revealed for the first time that His mission would end in His death and resurrection, Jesus told His disciples that some of them would not die before seeing Him coming in His kingdom (16:28). This would be literally fulfilled with the visions John received and recorded in the book of Revelation. But one week later, Jesus took His inner three - Peter, James, and John - up on a mountain where they got a glimpse of His glory.

As the glory of Christ shone forth, Moses and Elijah joined Him on the mountain. But instead of talking about the faithful lives these two great men of God had lived, Luke tells us their conversation focused on Jesus’ coming death in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). However, Peter again completely misses the point and wants to build three places of worship. Without thinking, Peter placed Moses and Elijah on the same level as Jesus. God the Father must correct Peter by reminding him of what he had just confessed a week earlier - Jesus is the Son of God and the only One who deserves worship. A lesson he would learn several times in this chapter.

LESSON ONE: Peter had forgotten who Jesus was - a fact he had just stated a week earlier. This caused him to misspeak and think of Jesus as less than He was (by putting Him on the same level with Moses and Elijah). What are some ways we can forget who Jesus really is? What happens when Jesus becomes less than the Almighty Son of God in our minds? What effect does this thinking have on our witness, worship, and service?

LESSON TWO: Jesus had recently sent out the Twelve to preach and heal. He had given them power to cast out demons (Matthew 10:5-8), but here they fail (Matthew 17:14-21). Perhaps they thought this power was available at their whim. But they failed because they had not been prepared. In order to have a strong faith in times of need, believers must build their relationship with the Lord during times of peace. If the disciples had been focused on their relationship with God in the quiet times, they would not have failed in the heat of battle with the enemy. Is your relationship with God a growing, every-day experience? Will your faith stand in the time of need?

LESSON THREE: With the Temple tax, Peter once again jumps the gun by answering the question without consulting Jesus. As the Son of God, He had no need to pay a tax to maintain God’s House. But Jesus sacrificed this freedom and miraculously provided for the tax so as not to offend others. Have you ever demanded your rights even if it caused someone else to be offended or hurt? What does it mean to sacrifice some freedoms in order to help others? (see 1 Corinthians 8:9-13).